

Pangshura sylhetensis Jerdon 1870 – Assam Roofed Turtle

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SUMMARY. – The Assam roofed turtle, *Pangshura sylhetensis* (Family Geoemydidae), is a small freshwater turtle (straight carapace length [CL] only to 185 mm), with thirteen pairs of marginals and a strikingly spiked vertebral keel. The species is strongly sexually dimorphic, with female CL to 185 mm and males to 97 mm. It occurs primarily in running waters in the hills of northeastern India and northeastern and southeastern Bangladesh, where it appears rare and localized. Little information exists on the biology of this species. It apparently nests between late October and February, corresponding with the cool, dry season, and produces clutches of ca. 6–12 eggs, hatchlings appearing mainly between March and April, at the beginning of the Southeast Monsoons. The species is threatened by logging of primary forests that causes siltation, capture for food and the pet trade, and incidental capture in fishing gear.

DISTRIBUTION. – Bangladesh, India. Localized distributed in northeast India and northeastern and southeastern Bangladesh.

SYNONYMY. – *Pangshura sylhetensis* Jerdon 1870, *Jerdonella sylhetensis*, *Kachuga sylhetensis*, *Kachuga (Pangshura) sylhetensis*.

SUBSPECIES. – None recognized.

STATUS. – IUCN 2010 Red List: Endangered (B1+2c) (assessed 2000); CITES: Appendix II; Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act: Schedule I.

Taxonomy. – *Pangshura sylhetensis* was described by Jerdon in 1870, based on three syntypes that were deposited in the British Museum (Natural History), from the Khasi Hills of Sylhet District (at present in Bangladesh). Subsequently, Gray (1870) transferred the taxon to a new monotypic genus,

Jerdonella, but Boulenger (1889) transferred it to the broad genus *Kachuga*. Moll (1986, 1987) revived *Pangshura* as a subgenus for this and several other small turtles that were still allocated to *Kachuga*. More recently, this species and its relatives have been reallocated to its original genus,



Figure 1. Adult male *Pangshura sylhetensis* from Kulsi River, Kamrup District, Assam, India. Photo by Indraneil Das.